

ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM NO. 4-A

(FBIS-431)

May 13, 1943

TO ALL MEMBERS OF FBIS STAFF:

12-36-43

It has been difficult during recent weeks for me to make decisions regarding the limitations placed upon us all as administrative officers by the Hatch Act and by the President's letter issued a year ago regarding public disagreements of administrative officials. These limitations were set down in Administrative Memorandum No. 4 issued by me last September 24th. May I summarize the contents of that memorandum.

The Director of the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service has delegated to him the task of clearing all articles written by members of the FBIS staff.

The principles which have guided me and which will continue to guide me in clearing speeches and articles are as follows:

- 1) The provisions of the Hatch Act, which prohibit any member of the Federal service from engaging in partisan political activity.
- 2) The rule against allowing publication or public knowledge of the current confidential material which is being handled by FBIS.
- 3) The President's letter asking that Federal administrative officials refrain from public disagreement with each other on matters of important national policy, but that these disagreements rather be carried on within the Governmental organization.

This special limitation regarding speeches and articles is necessarily a result of our membership in an agency dealing with confidential material during war time. It sharply limits the freedom of members of the staff in entering into public argument regarding important national issues. It is assumed that all members of FBIS are fully occupied in their important war task; engaging to any considerable extent in outside writing would inevitably raise the question of full devotion to the FBIS job.

It should be added that in some cases in connection with the Kerr Committee action, members of our staff have not always submitted proposed speeches, letters for publication or general circulation, or articles to me in advance. Insofar as these articles have been a direct defense of personal conduct, they would seem to me proper. I will construe strictly, however, the regulations indicated above as regards general discussion and writing on issues raised which involve the FCC as well as more general matters in political controversy. It is highly improper for administrative officers under the merit system to enter into public political debate. This is a function of members of the Commission itself which is in charge of policy and has taken up the public discussion of the issues raised by the Kerr Committee report.

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Robert D. Leigh  
Director

Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service